

# THE GUEST OF THE HEART'S DESIRE

Entry No. 53 in Our Prize Story Competition

BY EILEEN MORETTA



IT had been a strenuous night of stress and strained endeavor. Nerves had been strung taut, and bows of self control nigh snapped in twain. It was over now, and the Successful Dramatist had added another leaf to his laurels, and along the Milky Way of Melpomene a new star had risen. The Successful Dramatist leaned back in an old fashioned, high backed chair, and the New Star blazed in a feverish orbit opposite him. There was a table between, and viands fit for gods; but the New Star was beyond all such.

"It was glorious!" she cried. "Ah! there is nothing like it,—the applause, the mad intoxication of triumph! Oh, Fame, Fame! You are the breath of life! You are the all of being!" She laughed exultingly, a full gamut of notes running to one ecstatic crescendo of trills, thrillingly sweet.

The Successful Dramatist said nothing. He was a man past youth, but of countenance that any woman would look twice upon, perchance to her disquiet. His eyes were as twin gifts of speech, and spake many tongues of multiple emotions. They rested now upon the New Star with a hint of laughter; yet with the world-old sad mockery, the heritage that experience bestows upon the dreamer who is likewise a philosopher, in them.

"Why?" she challenged the eyes, the New Star, a bit delicious in her unaccustomed orbit. "Why? Why? It is a great play. It is, first and most, your triumph,—mine seems so small and trifling beside it. Yet I am hardly sane, I think; and you—is it nothing to you? It must be! It is only the dead, the moribund in life, who do not feel. And you, who are so keenly, so sensitively, all alive— You must be alive to this!"

The Successful Dramatist let his glance wander round the room. It was an ancient room, of old wainscots and age mellowed timbers,—quaint panes of glass set in heavy leads, hinges of doors and knobs, of silver, tarnished, yet sterling,—a room of other days and other manners so plainly writ upon it,—and in the light from its century-old candlesticks tonight a gravely handsome Successful Dramatist, the touches of Time just beginning to silver his temples, and a wonderful bronze haired, intensely vital New Star, the Present—a dazzling, splendid Present—so plainly writ upon her.

THE Successful Dramatist brought his eyes back from their slow travel and let them rest upon the New Star. In their regard, as they had fallen upon each appointment of the old room, had been a caress, and in them now was a caress as they rested on her. The one had been that of the muser who finds a bitter-sweet remembrance in what he contemplates; the other was more alive, intenser for the memory of that remembrance, and almost pathetically wistful withal.

Some of the too dazzling radiance seemed to fade from the atmosphere of the New Star, and she shone softer, through a misty nebula of quick intuition and sympathy,—twin qualities with which the gods had overblessed or cursed her. "Is it because it seems such a small thing, this triumph to you who are already famous, or because there is really something beyond, greater and finer really than Fame?" she questioned slowly.

The Successful Dramatist regarded her with a smile. When he smiled his lips seemed but lightly touched thereby; but in his eyes dwelt the real warmth of laughter. Into them the New Star looked now, and beheld that luminous light change to a soft and wistful regard, almost, she thought confusedly, like that of a pleading child at its mother's knee. "I should like to tell a story," said the Successful Dramatist, "to you, O Child

of the Comprehensive Eyes, a story that belongs fittingly to this room of other days. If you were to open that old escritoire yonder, and find therein a daguerreotype case,—the kind that fastens with a little hook, with strange figures carved on its ebony outside, and the bravery of faded red velvet within, and the scent of lavender and sandalwood about it,—it would not greatly surprise you, being that you found it in this room, and that you are the Child of Comprehensive Eyes. Such is there; but you must not find it yet awhile: perhaps—perhaps—never." He shook his head as though at some grave chiding of an inner folly. "It is the story," he said presently, "of a Boy; or, no," he corrected softly, while his eyes strayed again to the old escritoire, "the boy does not count for much—alas! It is the story of Ruth."

IT began in the meadow pasture where he, the Boy, padded through the dust each night at sunset to drive home the cows. The pasture of Friend Bethlehem adjoined, and between the two, like an uncurling silver ribbon, ran the brook. And on the opposite bank, at the selfsame hour, was Ruth, the pink sunbonneted daughter of the house of Bethlehem, there also to drive home the cows. The wind sometimes took liberties with the sunbonnet, and then it might be seen that Ruth was exceeding fair of face, and had hair of the most marvelous sheen,—hair like nothing but the satiny inside of a chestnut bur, of all shades to the Boy the loveliest in the world. In truth, the daughter of Friend Bethlehem, to the eyes of the Boy, was too desirable to be beheld but from the opposite side of the brook.

"One night there was a plank across it, and the straightest and smoothest to be found for miles around. And the Boy smiled deeply, meditating, and with intent to dare, many things.

"At sight of the plank Ruth paid no outward heed to it at all; but the brazen wind whisked back the sunbonnet, and the Boy beheld the utter beauty of a primrose blush upon a fair maid's cheek. And ere the marvel of it had faded he was across the plank. With much

outward assurance but inward fear, he held out violets, picked with an eye to the longest stems. 'They grow all sizes down in our meadow. I thought, perhaps,' he stammered mendaciously, 'they didn't grow over here in yours.'

"Thee is mistaken," said Ruth. 'They grow likewise in our meadow.'

"Oh!" said the Boy stupidly; but he still held forth his offering.

"After a long, long moment a little hand reached out and hesitatingly took the flowers. 'Thy fence rails are down,' faltered a soft voice from the sunbonnet, 'and thy kine will stray.' She moved away as she spoke, and the Boy's short lived triumph fled. She turned at some little distance and looked upon him with austerity. 'Thee should always speak the truth,' she admonished, and turned her back upon him, engulfed in gloom. Farther still she paused and turned once more. Her eyes were down, and the sunbonnet wholly hid her face. 'I—I thank thee for thy posy,' she faltered. 'I—I do not think thee bad at heart.' Then she bent one fleeting look upon him—even a Quaker maid could hardly help that look, the Boy being of well favored limb and feature, praise God!—and turned away with swift finality.

BUT on the next night—oh, marvel!—there came from the Quaker lassie a timid 'Good even, Friend,' from across the brook. The Boy had been fishing, and triumphant capture after arduous struggle had been his. This, and that shy 'Good even,' made him not mortal, but as one of the gods. As from an Olympus he flung forth vivid speech. There had been one trout 'dare.' For two mortal hours had a wary imp defied him, until he became the only spoil worthy of stress, and Machiavellian ambuscade, and ultimate thrilling capture. 'I got him at last!' laughed the Boy. 'Never a trout dare for me; no, not any dare!'

"The eyes of Ruth had grown large, looking upon this semimad Boy. He had pushed back his hat, and his hair was tumbled about his eyes. That adorable pink was in the cheeks of Ruth, and a little impulsive lit

was in her voice. 'Thee should do great things in this world!' she cried impulsively, and the mad one flashed a brilliant look upon her and grew tall.

"I will!" he decreed with the sublimity of Jove himself. 'The world shall notice! Just you wait!' And a moment later, 'You believe me, don't you?' he queried, wistful, in all his arrogance, that this one little creature of all the world should believe.

"And shining eyes were raised to his, 'Assuredly I believe thee.'

The voice of the Successful Dramatist faltered, and for a moment's space he leaned his head on his hand. "Sublime faith of the Innocents!" he whispered. "What Fame shall ever rank with faith like thine?" He lifted his head, and met the eyes of the New Star. "You have hair like hers," he said musingly, "and eyes like unto hers, sometimes."

The New Star said nothing, waiting, and after a moment he went on.

THERE came a time when the feet of Ruth might be beguiled across the plank, and beneath the old apple tree on his side of the brook she would sit and listen, while the Boy let loose those whirlwinds of youth that were to conquer the world.

"And, looking upon her once, the sunbonnet fallen aside and the sunlight sifting down upon the wonderful hair, the heart of the Boy socked within him with a thrill not born of wild ambitions. 'How pretty you are, Ruth!' he cried, and his arm flashed round her waist.

"But Ruth moved beyond the encircling arm with eyes of grave reproof. 'Nay!' she said gently. 'Thee knows I have to tell Mother.'

"Do you tell your mother everything?" he demanded.

"Assuredly," replied the maid. 'Did thee not know? The daughter of the house tells to her mother everything.'

"The Boy was silent, pon-



She Placed It Reverently in His Hands—and Waited.



dering this. 'But, Ruth,' he began presently, 'it wouldn't be wrong to kiss—me?'

"There was no answer."

"The Boy pressed on. 'Do you think,' he insisted, 'that it would be wrong to kiss,' he edged closer, and there was a dangerously subtle accent on the word, 'me?'

"Ruth had captured and put on the sunbonnet: the reply seemed to come from very far back among its depths. 'I cannot find it in my heart,' came falteringly from the sunbonnet, 'that it would be of a woeful wickedness to—kiss—thee.'

"It was just at this moment that a shadow fell across the opposite bank. 'It is Father,' whispered Ruth, rising."

"Friend Bethlehem looked at them closely and long. After a space he dropped his head upon his breast, shaking it slowly twice or thrice, and, passed on."

"That evening after Ruth had a message, shyly delivered. 'I did speak to Mother,' she said. 'She told

me I must refrain from loitering with thee beside the brook; but that, if thee desire, thee can walk yonder and see me at the house.'

"They were all on the porch when the Boy walked 'yonder.' The Successful Dramatist broke off abruptly, and looked at the New Star. "It was that porch," he said, "that you entered an hour ago. I—I had a fancy to hear your footsteps cross it."

The New Star rose noiselessly and crossed to the window, looking out upon the weather stained boards and the trailed woodbine across the lattice. The moon showed all distinctly, even the hollow worn by passing feet in the middle of the old stone steps.

The Successful Dramatist crossed the room and stood beside her. "It was there," he spoke musingly, "that the Boy sat, on the upper step. And over on the high backed settle Friend Bethlehem, and in the wooden rocker Ruth's mother. But the little stool, on line with the step whereon he sat, as well the Boy had noted,

Ruth's low stool, that is no longer there. It is put away among the memoried things."

"Oh!" cried the New Star, with a soft intake of the breath. And then, with that Heaven-given sympathy, "Would it hurt too much," she questioned, timidly eager, "to go on?"

The Successful Dramatist shook his head. "Not to you, O Child of the Comprehensive Eyes," he said, and for an instant his hand lay over hers, and she thrilled at the touch. "I think," he spoke musingly, "that I brought you here to tell it."

THEE may call at times to see Ruth," said the mother; 'though thee are both but children.'

"The Boy interrupted her with more ardor than manners. 'Why, I am a man!' he cried. 'I am eighteen! And I am going to be a great man, before long!'

"Gently the mother laughed; but Friend Bethlehem,

*Continued on page 15*

## ON A DESSERT ISLAND

Entry No. 54 in Our Prize Story Competition

By ROY L. McCARDELL

WHEN I was coming back on the good ship Arabic from the bully tour of Europe I had last fall, the stateroom of Thaddeus Skewton Skidmore was right next to mine. On the passenger list he was simply T. S. Skidmore; but Thaddeus Skewton Skidmore was the name in full on the engraved card he tendered to me as we sat on the sunny side of the main deck, for we were steamer chair neighbors too.

He was not the most popular man on the ship by far. He was the storm center of many a fierce row in the smoking room, and in any general discussion on ship-board he was always a most vociferous minority leader. Were the subject "Does two and two make four,"—and all usual extemporaneous discussions in mixed assemblies are generally on such dead levels of the obvious,—Thaddeus Skewton Skidmore would take and hold, with all the honors of war, the eager and angry negative.

So, with a forty-eight hours out from Queenstown, the dull, lists of the great deep—the old ladies of both sexes who play whist in a way to make the angels weep, the buyers coming back who get up the deadly deck games, and the people who tell you they take the slow ships not because they are cheaper but because they are more comfortable—all left Thaddeus Skewton Skidmore severely alone.

But I liked him because he was different. He looked different too. In the first place, he had a face colored like a meerschaum; and possibly with the same substance, nicotine, for he smoked incessantly.

He was bald of head and barreled of body, and he had a long straight nose, also highly colored, projecting from the exact center of a fat, smooth shaven face. He wore a flat-topped round felt hat of pearl colored felt, such as gilded youths wear in Spain, and he clothed his outer self in a short, heavy peajacket of woolly blue and check trousers of black and white. Around a flaring stand up collar, such as the late Mr. Gladstone affected, he wore a bright green poplin cravat, in which shone a beautiful star sapphire set in gold. When exercising round the deck Thaddeus Skewton Skidmore thrust a black knobby stick, as aggressive looking as himself, between the crook of both elbows and his back, and, stiffly erect, trotted about with such a fierce, militant air that if any of the other promenaders had been disposed to laugh at the queer figure he made they one and all felt it the better part of valor to restrain themselves.

Not that Thaddeus Skewton Skidmore hadn't a sense of humor. In fact, he gave me two reasons to suspect he had. The first was in allusion to his green necktie beneath his incarnadine jowls and his still more crimson nose.

"By George, Sir!" he said, "this cravat embroiled me greatly in Ireland, Sir! It got me in a great deal of acrimonious discussion, Sir! They did not like to see the Red above the Green."

Another reason that made me suspect he had a keen sense of the ridiculous was when we broached our various occupations in life, as deck acquaintances invariably do, and he said to me, "Well, Sir, we're well met! I'm a newspaper man too; but I saved my money and have retired on it."

But what really brought us close together, and what inspired Thaddeus Skewton Skidmore to tell me the story of his peculiarities and his life and the great adventure of the Dessert Island, was prefaced by an apology he made me for the almost daily rows he had with his room steward.

From what I could hear, and I could hear it almost every word, Thaddeus Skewton Skidmore had the menus for luncheon and dinner brought to his room aforetime, and it was the occasional presence or absence of some viand on the bill of fare that incited him to ebullitions of rage storms at sea, so to speak, which rose high above the kick of the screw, the rattle of the ash hoists, the screams of skylarking children on the decks, and the slapping of the waves against the hull.

What this one thing in particular was that so upset him was never mentioned; but I found out. For, after a particularly violent outburst over the dinner card brought to him early one afternoon by the room steward, he joined me on deck, after I had come up from a meal at which he had not been present. He was still red and heated with his passing rage, and, as he plumped down his steamer chair beside me, he looked at me curiously

and then remarked:

"You heard me raging that ninny of a steward, and now you see me doing without my dinner. I guess you think I'm crazy—what? Well, listen! You have a good face and plenty of it, and I'll unbosom. Yes, Sir, I'll tell you all, Sir, all!"

And here follows the story of Thaddeus Skewton Skidmore, as he told it to me on the deck of the good ship Arabic, in mid-Atlantic on the seventh of September, 1910.

TO begin with, I am not crazy. I have my peculiarities, I admit, and I am what dull minds call 'eccentric.' This is their way of stating that I do not agree with them in their love of the bald, the trite, the conventional, and the obvious.

"It is true that I make myself unpopular in many places by declaring, at inappropriate times, that men who play the piano are no good, and the better they play it the more worthless they are. It is also true that I have always warned the world at large against those who come bearing beards, and that I hold firmly to the theory that men who are military mad are sapheads. Here too I will also admit that my prejudice against men whose name is Miller is most pronounced, and I have been vituperated and even assaulted because of my open insistence that were I in a position of power I should never employ anyone having the name, nor would I wittingly or unwittingly mingle in any assembly where any Millers were present.

"Now, the Millers are a numerous race and prone to pugnacity, and I cannot criticize my friends for their insistence upon my confining myself to a list of safe subjects for public discussion and keep the conversation away from male piano players, facial foliage, militia enthusiasts, and men whose names are Miller.

"In all honesty, I must admit that it is a bad beginning for a day's pleasure or the evening's enjoyment when bystanders with beards, persons with musical inclinations, or strangers who bear the name of Miller take exceptions to my strictures, although not addressed to them, and the situation resolves itself, in theater lobbies, in restaurants, the street, and public conveyances, into a war of words, mutual exchanges of heated epithets, and oftentimes physical violence.

"I can well perceive how the patience of my friends has been sorely tried on many occasions by my lack of tact in these regards. I have had the most charming of women refuse to go to the opera or theater with me while I wore my dress coat buttoned to hide a gory shirt bosom—my nose will bleed most profusely at the



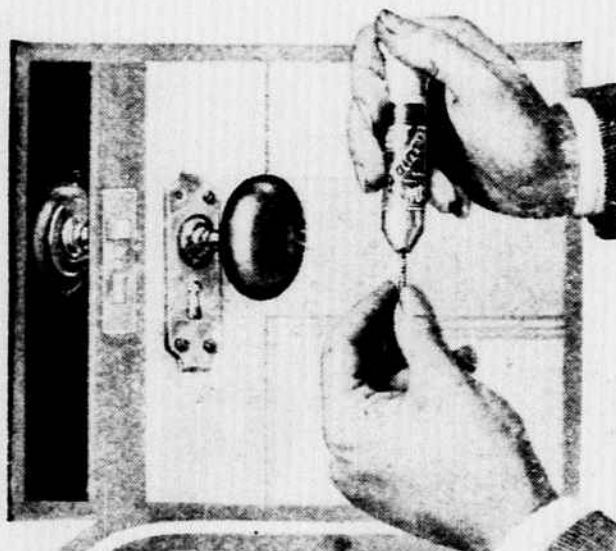
"Great Foaming Bulges of Boiled Rice Mush-roomed Over the Deck."

slightest encounter. Then too, candor compels me to say that a brawl is not a pleasant prelude to an evening's enjoyment, and very few ladies are capable of following the score of the opera or the plot of the play when a few moments previously they have witnessed their escort being hit on the nose by a, until then, comparative stranger.

"But I am not crazy. My mind is keen and alert, my intentions are good, and I endeavor to be just with all men, and to respect the opinion of others if they simply will give some heed to mine.

"Then too, my efforts to remove the unnecessary odium from many so called 'menial' occupations has brought, it must be confessed, nothing but the cheap ridicule of the fatuous upon me. Most conspicuous along this line of uplift, of course, was my endeavor to raise the standard of bootblackery, that it might be recognized as fellow to the art of brush daubery in color. In other words, that, as bootblacks worked in oil and water colors and achieved artistic work on leather, why not compel all shoe shining to be done in studios rather than on street corners? I held and truly, that the artistic environment of a studio would soon exert its





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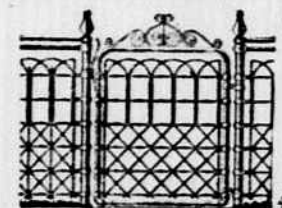
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## THE GUEST OF THE HEART'S DESIRE

Continued from page 6

his head sunk on his breast, shook it slowly  
twice or thrice, but said nothing.

"Ruth will let thee out," said the mother,  
as he rose to go. "Do not forget, Daughter,  
to lock the gate."

"It was going down the path that the Boy  
sought and possessed himself of Ruth's hand.  
'You will wait for me, Ruth?' he questioned,  
leaning against the gate, eyes shining, pulses  
a-tingle. 'I am going to do great things in the  
world—soon. And then I will come back for  
you; for there is no one anywhere like you.  
You will wait?'"

"Yea," whispered Ruth, "of a surety will  
I wait. And thou," with a shy laugh at an  
impulsive movement of his, "must wait like-  
wise." The Boy was on the other side of the  
gate, and she closed it softly, holding the key  
in the lock. "I hate to lock thee out," she fal-  
tered; then, as the big key turned slowly and  
the barrier between them gave her courage,  
'but in my heart, I trow, thou art fast—  
locked in."

"Surely, now, what more than this was  
needed, even did not all the wild soul of him  
clamor for that battle with the untried forces  
of the unknown world? To wait, yes! But  
not for long, when there were heights of re-  
nown to scale, and from their summits grasp  
the stars of fame. And a sudden great trage-  
dy crystallized all the chaotic ambitions into  
definite purpose. Sitting in his old hickory  
chair, as was his wont nightly, to watch the  
ever changing glory of the sunset, the Boy  
one evening found his father with eyes that  
saw it not. And after he had followed him  
to the last resting place, the Boy faced the  
world, not only an orphan, but practically a  
beggar.

"But he was fast locked within a maiden's  
heart! Oh, nothing to do then but ride forth  
with Destiny to conquest braver than knight  
of old! His heart sprang up to meet Fate's  
challenge like a warhorse at the trumpet's call.

"And that last night, the eve of his de-  
parture, under the stars, Ruth kissed him.  
Under the stars, while he held her fast, and  
his heart surged high in the wonder of its  
first young passion and the terrific sweep  
of its headlong ambitions, with God knows  
what mingling of purity and innocence and  
dawning woman faith and trust, Ruth  
kissed him.

"And he cried aloud, holding her fast.  
'You will be so proud of me, Sweetheart,  
when I come back!'"

"And up to the shining stars went the  
eyes of Ruth, and then back to him with  
the steadfast light of those mystery worlds  
within their depths, while she whispered,  
'I will count the stars till thee returns.'"

THE New Star, by the window, turned  
and rested her forehead on the case-  
ment, the wonderful glory of her burnished  
hair, woven with moonbeams, falling across  
the leaded panes. The Successful Dramatist  
felt the splash of tears upon his hand. "If  
it grieves you—" he began.

Her eyes met his, very lovely under their  
wet lashes. "Go on!" she entreated. "Tell  
me how the Boy found Fame."

"Are you sure he found it," he questioned,  
"that Fame which seems to you the One  
guest of the heart's desire?"

She made a movement as of dissenting in-  
terruption; but stayed herself, looking at  
him with a shy, inscrutable look, half elf,  
half sibyl, wholly adorable, in the moon-  
light. For a moment he looked at her; then  
began a slow pacing of the room.

"No need to tell the way of it," he went  
on, "the heart harrowed, rock strewn way  
of it. Disappointment, Disillusion, Loneli-  
ness, they are the grim Three who weave  
the garment men call Fame; with often  
skeleton Hunger for the tailor. But," he  
ceased his pacing, and crossed once more to  
the chair beside the table, "the garment  
was fashioned at last. And one night, some  
such night as this, Fortune flung it across  
his shoulders. And on that night but one  
thought flashed clear. Now, at last, could  
he go to the girl who counted the stars!"

"The time had been long; for he had set  
for himself the stern decree of a stubborn  
pride. Not until dreams came true would  
he go to her! And now he was going. Oh,  
Fame was sweet! It rioted in his blood; he  
was drunk with its wine as he once more trod  
the old path up the hill.

"The gate was open. So unreasoning is  
love, the Boy had expected to find her there  
waiting, and paused, disappointed. A num-  
ber of people were about. This angered  
him. Why should they elect to stand before  
that gate? He wished Ruth there alone, of  
all the world. Impatient, he awaited their  
departure; but they did not go. From the  
house, also, others began to come, slowly  
and sedately, two by two. Something they

were bringing with them. The Boy, look-  
ing on up the path, saw Friend Bethlehem  
and the mother, walking, like the others,  
eyes cast down, side by side. Now they  
were nearly abreast of him; but this that  
they carried came first, slowly, and with a  
hush around it. It was a coffin, and the  
sun, glancing across it, flashed upon the  
silver plate, and seared its letters as by  
lightning upon the Boy's brain:

"Ruth, Aged 19."

"Ah! well and faithfully had she counted  
the stars! Fool that he had been in his  
pride! The lights of Fame, what were they?  
They were as nothing to the light that beat  
upon that coffin lid!

"The Boy staggered back. Mad things  
with hammers were beating upon an anvil,  
and the anvil was his brain. They were op-  
posite him now, the father and mother.  
They saw him crushed, dazed, despairing.  
Friend Bethlehem, his head bowed on his  
breast, shook it slowly twice or thrice, and  
passed on. But the mother, Ruth's mother,  
gently she reached out a hand and caught  
his, drawing him to her silently, tenderly.  
And between the two, holding fast to that  
trembling, withered hand as to salvation,  
the glory of Fame dropped from him as a  
ragged garment, the Boy followed the coffin  
down the hill."

IN the room fell a silence. The eyes of the  
New Star looked without, but saw  
nothing for the tears that fell upon the win-  
dow ledge. After a space she turned and  
softly crossed the room. The Successful  
Dramatist sat still by the table, his face  
shaded by his hand. The New Star knelt  
beside him, and as a timid child plucks at  
its mother's sleeve gently drew down the  
hand, and her shining eyes looked up to his.  
"I know why you have told me the story,"  
she whispered, "and with all my heart I  
thank you!"

"Oh, Child, Child!" cried the Successful  
Dramatist. But she stayed him with a ges-  
ture toward the old escurtoire.

"May I—now?" she questioned.

"The key is in the lock," he said simply.  
And she crossed the room, and unlocked  
the drawer, and took therefrom the case of  
ebony, and bringing it to him placed it rever-  
ently in his hands; then, slipping to her  
knees again, waited till he opened it and  
laid it before her on his knee.

And for a long time the Comprehensive  
Eyes looked upon the sweet and steadfast  
serenity of those other eyes. "Beautiful  
eyes of Faith," she murmured at last, "you  
make me ashamed!" And she hid her own  
on his knee.

The Successful Dramatist closed the case  
softly, and his hand rested on the bowed  
head of the New Star. "O Child of the  
Comprehensive Eyes," he said, "my boy-  
hood heart was hers, and you know how  
well she guarded it! But now," a sadness  
beyond any that had been there before was  
in his voice, "now my heart is in the keeping  
of another, and she—the lights of Fame are  
to her the only lights! And so I am as one  
who stands on a lonely shore in the darkness  
of a night without stars—alone!"

"Ah, no!" she raised her head, and her  
eyes were very beautiful. "It is not so—  
now. She has taught me. You—" She  
rose to her feet, a lovely wave of color  
sweeping over her face. She held the little  
case clasped tightly in both hands.

"Child—" the Successful Dramatist faced  
her, the light of a great adoration, long  
sternly held in check, upleaping in his eyes.  
"O Child, Child!" he cried, with a very pas-  
sion of yearning. "Every wave that comes  
in upon that lonely shore whispers your  
name! If a worshipping heart—" he broke  
off abruptly. "It is the delusion of a dream-  
er!" he muttered brokenly.

"No," her voice was low, but infinitely  
sweet, "that other was the delusion. Oh,"  
she cried, clasping tighter the little ebony  
case, "she has taught me—yes, even more  
than you could have taught me, how greater  
than Fame, greater than all, the One guest  
of the heart's desire, is Love!"

## ABSENT FOR CAUSE

THE following letter was written in Eng-  
lish, just as it stands, by a Japanese  
student in a missionary training school, to  
account for his absence from work:

"HONORED SIR.—Having been amputated  
from my family for several months, and as I  
have complaints of the abdomen, coupled  
with great conflagrations of the internals, with  
entire prostration from all desire to work, I  
beg to be excused from orderly work for ten  
or nine more days, and in duty bound I will  
always pray for the salubrity of your temper  
and the enlargement of your family."

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